the comparative loss suffered by FCI during the years 1985, 1986 and 1987;

(c) what are the main reasons identified by Government for the continuous losses incurred by FCI; and

(d) what remedial measures are being contemplated by Government to improve its working?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FERTILIZERS IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. PRABHU): (a) to (d) Although no comparative analysis of the working of the Fertilizer Corporation of India (FCI) has been made, Government had set up a Task Force on 27.6.1986 under the Chairmanship of Shri Paul Pothen to go into the working of Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation and FCI. The main reasons for the losses incurred by FCI are low capacity utilisation due to frequent equipment breakdown, power problems, design deficiency etc. The remedial measures include closure of Sindri Rationalisation plant and writing of its losses, revamp and rehabilitation of Ramagundam and Talcher plants in the light of Krupp Kopper's report, revamping and technology upgradation of the Urea plant at Gorakhpur, etc.

Capacity increase in Tata Iron and Steel Company

365. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration for approval of capacity increase in Tata Iron and Steel Company; and

(b) whether any change in technology is also involved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF STEEL IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA): (a) and (b) TISCO have submitted a proposal to Government for an 'in principle' approval to further modernise their steel plant at Jamshedpur. The proposed modernisation is expected to result in expansion of present capacity of 2.1 Million Tonne to a capacity of 2.7 Million Tonne of saleable steel. The proposal also envisages some technological improvements.

Amendment of the Factories Act

366. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any suggestion for amendment of the Factories Act; and

(b) if so, what are the major amendments suggested and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI BINDESHWARI DUBEY): (a) and (b) The Factories Act, 1948 was amended during the Budget Session 1987. After the amendments had been made, representations, were received from certain organisations of employers seeking further amendments to the Act. The suggestions mainly related to amendment to the definition of 'Occupier'. Grant of exemption to small scale industries from the provisions of the Act, reduction in penal provisions, safeguards against misuse of powers by Inspectors, etc.

The Act has been amended to provide for safer and better working conditions and environment in the factories. The Government are not in favour of amending the provisions of the Act.

Subsidies for rice and wheat

367. SHRI ALADI ARUNA *alias* V. ARUNACHALAM: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) what is the rate of subsidy per quintal granted for rice and wheat

for the years 1986-87 and 1987-88; and

(b) what is the reason for the discrimination in granting subsidy?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI D. L. BAITHA): (a) The rate of consumer subsidy per quintal granted for rice and wheat for the years 1986-87 and 1987-88 is given as under:—

(Rs. per quintal)

Year	Wheat	Rice
1986-87	84.93	80.47
1987-88 (RE)	76.64	72.58

(b) There is no discrimination in granting consumer subsidy for rice and wheat. The subsidy represents the difference between the economic cost and issue price of each category of foodgrains.

Import of Radioactive food products

368. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item which appeared in the 'Times of India' of the 25th June, 1988 under the Caption "Redioactive food often sent back to third world countries", and if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether Government, propose to take any steps to check the receipt of such items in the country in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir, Government's attention has been drawn to the news item.

(b) Necessary arrangements have been made with the European Economic Community (EEC) that the dairy commodities despatched from the European countries must be accompanied by a certificate stating that the consignment is free from radioactive contamination. Similarly, on arrival of commodities in India, arrangements have been made with the Bhaba, Atomic Research Centre (BARC) and their environmental laboratories at the port towns in Bombay, Madras and Calcutta for testing of the samples for determination of radioactive residues from the shipments of the commodities received under Operation Flood from the EEC countries. Samples of Skimmed Milk Powder, butter oil, white butter are being sent to BARC by the erstwhile Indian Dairy Corporation (now National Dairy Development Board) for testing and certificates obtained.

Effects of drought on foodgrains production

369. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have assessed the effects of drought on foodgrains production during the last year; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV). (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The production of foodgrains during 1987-88 is tentatively estimated at 137.0 million tonnes which shows a decline of about 4.9 per cent over the previous year's production of 144.1 million tonnes.